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women's health issues girls'  
opportunities women in business  
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family welfare to work violence  
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business and entrepreneurship  
education and training employment

and entrepreneurship education and training employment and pay equity balancing work and family

# 2000 Annual Report

Governor's Commission  
on the Status of Women in Illinois

Governor George H. Ryan



## GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ILLINOIS

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GEORGE H. RYAN  
GOVERNOR

December 1, 2000

LURA LYNN RYAN  
FIRST LADY

Dear Governor Ryan:

Honorary Chair

Corinne Wood  
Lt. Governor

Chair

Judith A. Gold

Commissioners

Dr. Willie T. Barrow  
Norman Bobins  
John H. Bryan  
Marylou D. Crane  
Mary Cameron Frey  
Cary S. Groth  
Kaethe Morris Hoffer  
Anne Ladky  
Judy McCaskey  
Mary Morten  
Joyce A. Nardulli  
Christine Pederson-Taylor  
Audrey Rone-Peeples  
Margarita Perez  
Miriam Pride  
Hedy M. Ratner  
Kathleen Rothschild  
Gerri Scott  
Barbara Shaw  
Lauren J. Sugerman  
Jayne Carr Thompson  
Joyce Watson  
Cynthia R. Williams  
Julia Zhu

Executive Director

Ellen Solomon

James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph St.  
Suite 16-100  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
phone 312-814-5743  
fax 312-814-3823

It is an honor to present to you our "Year Two" (2000) Report, which serves as an addendum to the 1999 Report of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Illinois. This Report represents an update of the priorities and accomplishments of the Commission in its second year of work.

When you had the foresight to re-establish the Commission as a permanent entity in the first Executive Order of your Administration, you called on us to build upon the recommendations of the prior Commission in its 1998 Report. With the mission of promoting economic opportunity and independence for women in Illinois at the forefront, the Commission's eight working groups outlined priorities for legislative, executive and administrative action.

During Year Two, we are proud that we have accomplished many of the goals we articulated in our Year One Report. We are working cooperatively with members of the General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Lt. Governor, women's organizations, the foundation community, State Agencies and with the private sector to build coalitions to achieve our goals. We are reaching out across the State to continue to listen to those who are "living the issues," as well as to inform people of our work.

We offer the following Report to update you on our progress this year. We also look forward to sharing this document with the members of the General Assembly. This new 2000 report works in tandem with the 1999 Report. All the priorities originally set forth in the 1999 Report continue to guide our activities. This new document serves to articulate our accomplishments and refines or adds to our current priorities where needed to move us closer to our goals in 2001.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Gold  
Chair

Lt. Governor Corinne Wood  
Honorary Chair

Support Agencies:

Illinois Department on Aging, Bureau of the Budget, Capital Development Board, Illinois Department of Central Management Services, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Public Aid, Illinois Department of Public Health Office of Women's Health, Illinois Department of Human Rights, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department of Revenue, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Transportation, Office of Banks & Real Estate, Office of the Lt. Governor, Office of the Governor.

# introduction

Governor George Ryan permanently re-established the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Illinois in January 1999. The Commission created eight working groups to address key issues, raise awareness and advocate for solutions. Those working groups are:

- Education and Training
- Women in Business and Entrepreneurship
- Women's Health Issues
- Girls' Opportunities
- Violence Reduction
- Welfare to Work
- Employment and Pay Equity
- Balancing Work and Family

Each working group is chaired by one or two Commissioners with additional Commissioners serving as working group members. Additionally, nearly 200 representatives of relevant organizations are invited to serve as experts and resources in the issue areas so that the working groups have an active and informed membership. State Agency liaisons act as resources and support for working groups and their initiatives.

The recent contributions of the working groups' efforts and expertise toward accomplishing the Commission's objectives are listed within. This document describes priorities and special focus initiatives, in addition to the agreed upon priorities from the 1999 annual report that the Commission remains committed to implementing.



# education and training

**Chair:** Commissioner Anne Ladky

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission sponsored seven focus groups around the state to discuss women's access to information about education and training programs. The focus groups also brought out information on how issues such as child care and transportation affect women's ability to stay in these programs. The information will be used for future Commission advocacy.
- ✓ To help women learn more about higher-paying, non-traditional occupations, and how to access training for them, the Commission recommended including information in the resource rooms of all Illinois Employment and Training Centers. The Illinois Department of Employment Security responded by increasing the inventory of such materials.
- ✓ The Commission monitored the initial impact of changes in the major federal vocational education law that reduced funding for programs serving displaced homemakers and single parents. This assessment will form the basis for recommendations to ensure continuing services to these under-served groups.

## 2001 Priorities

- Develop and advocate for programs and policies that will expand women's access to and participation in education and training.
- Develop a plan to expand awareness among women of resources available to support their participation in education and training.



# women in business and entrepreneurship

Chair: Commissioner Hedy Ratner

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission successfully advocated for the creation of the Universal Certification Task Force by Governor Ryan. Commission members were appointed to the task force on certifying women- and minority-owned businesses. The Commission collaborated with state and local entities to set strategies for better certification coordination and reciprocity among agencies.
- ✓ The Commission successfully advocated for Illinois FIRST contracts and grants to call for inclusion of women and minorities as employees and contractors.
- ✓ The Commission set a priority to increase the number of women in state leadership positions. Governor Ryan selected a significant percentage of women for state appointments, and the number of women on state boards, commissions, advisory boards and task forces has greatly increased. To date, more than one-third of the high-level appointments of this Administration have been women. The executive agencies are also following the Governor's lead. For example, the Department of Human Services assessed the diversity of all the entities that advise it and required all new groups to have a balanced representation.
- ✓ The Commission spearheaded the "Power Fair for Fair Power" conference in October 2000 with more than 20 statewide women's leadership organizations to prepare more women for leadership positions in the private and public sectors.
- ✓ The Commission conducted statewide focus groups on increasing access to capital (debt and equity) to women-owned businesses. The result will be a guide for bankers, investors and women business owners to be published in 2001 in partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago for nationwide distribution.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to increase opportunities for women to participate in Illinois FIRST contracts.
- Continue to promote and support women in leadership roles and move toward gender equity in all state boards, task forces, advisory boards, commissions and private sector boards of directors.
- Further the initiatives of the Universal Certification Task Force, seeking reciprocity among the many certifying entities to enable women business owners to avoid the enormous inefficiencies and financial cost of multiple certifications.
- Continue work with the Illinois Development Finance Authority to provide a new form of loan financing against future payments from state-funded contracts. This will especially benefit thousands of small companies that rely on government business.
- Continue to work toward expanding women's business technical assistance statewide.

Women-owned businesses support other women-owned businesses —  
it's a powerful network that encourages entrepreneurship.

—Commissioner Hedy Ratner

# women's health issues

**Chair:** Commissioner Barbara Shaw

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission produced the brochure "Women's Health: What Every Woman Should Know," which describes rights and benefits under the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act and covers preventative health tips. The brochure is being extensively distributed through doctors and health organizations.
- ✓ The Commission advocated for Contraceptive Insurance Coverage and helped its passage in the House of Representatives. The bill is currently under review in the Senate Rules Committee.
- ✓ The Commission supported mental health parity legislation that would require health insurance companies to cover mental health services on an equal basis with other health services.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to advocate for the passage of the Contraceptive Insurance Bill.
- Continue to support mental health parity legislation.
- Continue to advocate for tobacco settlement funds to be allocated to health-related programs that are gender-appropriate and specifically address women and girls.

# girls' opportunities

**Co-Chairs:** Commissioner Cary Groth and Commissioner Mim Pride

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ Commission members advocated successfully for the continuation of the Illinois Gender Equity and Sports Bill, which provides for the continuation of existing and establishment of new collegiate men's and women's athletic programs. The bill passed both the House and Senate with nearly unanimous votes.
- ✓ The Commission sponsored the Economic Literacy and Empowerment Symposium for 35 organizations and leaders from around the state to find ways to implement more opportunities for girls. Participants are currently forming groups to address specific issues.
- ✓ The Commission hosted a "Take Your Daughter to Work Day" event, which was sponsored by Lifetime TV. Both Governor Ryan and Lt. Governor Wood attended the event with 60 participants.
- ✓ Members of the Commission participated in the Choices for Success Conference and held focus groups with young women in grades 6 through 11 on how to make choices that would shape their future.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to support and expand compliance with Title IX legislation, which prohibits sex discrimination at educational institutions receiving federal funds, and develop and promote programming for adherence.
- Continue to research and promote publications that encourage girls to explore various educational and career opportunities and develop a bibliography of girls' resources.

# violence reduction

**Co-Chairs:** Commissioner Kaethe Morris Hoffer and Commissioner Audrey Rone-Peebles

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission worked to raise awareness about the need for Illinois to have adequate civil remedies for victims of rape and other gender violence. The Commission drafted language and worked closely with the Governor's office in advocating for the Illinois Gender Violence Act. The bill remains active in the House.
- ✓ The Commission held a series of roundtable discussions at Illinois universities to raise awareness about violence against women, gender-based violence and the Gender Violence Act. More roundtables are planned for the coming year.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to advocate for the Illinois Gender Violence Act in upcoming legislative sessions.
- Continue to advocate for the legislative or administrative enactment of the Family Violence Option (FVO). The FVO is an optional provision of the federal welfare reform law that allows states increased flexibility in applying TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) requirements for families impacted by domestic violence. If Illinois were to enact the FVO, it would be better able to help women escape domestic violence and achieve independence for themselves and their children.
- Work with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) on the implementation of the 1999 Family Friendly Workplace Initiative and develop "best practices" for Illinois businesses to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault issues in the workplace.
- The Commission, in advocating for the Gender Violence Act, encountered many who opposed the law simply because it would give legal redress to lesbian and gay male victims of gender violence as well as to straight male and female victims of such harm. Seeing this, the Commission decided it must take stronger steps to oppose the persistent discrimination faced by people who don't conform to traditional expectations for their gender in our society, and therefore has endorsed, and will be advocating for the Illinois Human Rights Bill. The Human Rights Bill, House Bill 474, would amend the Illinois Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

**A bill like the Gender Violence Act is driven by a commitment to provide all women—not only those who conform to traditional women's roles—with the equal protection of the law.**

**—Commissioner Kaethe Morris Hoffer**

# welfare to work

**Co-Chairs:** Commissioner Cynthia Williams and Commissioner Mary Morten

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission supported Financial Links for Low Income People (FLLIP) in a pilot to teach budgeting and financial planning. Participants can be eligible for a matched savings program of funds for education, home or car ownership or starting a business. The program was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) to implement the pilot in four sites.
- ✓ Commission members joined state advocates and community organizations, as well as the Illinois Conference of Women Legislators, in advocating for a State Earned Income Tax Credit, which can result in cash refunds to qualifying individuals. Thousands of low-income families learned about the federal and state credits through DHS funded tax consultation programs.
- ✓ Members of the Commission met regularly with the Secretary of the Department of Human Services to share recommendations and program plans related to welfare. For example, the Commission provided input to a DHS survey to access TANF cases without work activity for three years.

## 2001 Priorities

- Highlight and communicate the successes and challenges of women moving off welfare, as well as those who remain on the rolls.
- Continue to pursue ways to make the TANF client a partner with welfare staff and establish better communication by calling for consistent treatment and quality service for all TANF recipients. Work for extended TANF office hours so clients won't have to interrupt their work schedules to conduct TANF business.
- Continue to encourage the successful completion of educational and training programs for TANF clients by advocating for a reduction in the mandatory number of hours worked to allow more time for training.
- Continue efforts to diminish the debilitating effect of domestic violence by: calling for better identification of TANF clients in need of domestic violence support; connecting those clients to resources; and advocating for "stop the clock" measures when they miss work or training due to abuse.
- Continue to foster economic independence among all clients, including those lacking the most basic life skills, through funding life skills education, in addition to job skills education. The Commission will also call for extended time limits for women requiring greater work readiness training.





# employment and pay equity

**Chair:** Commissioner Lauren Sugerman and Julie Kruse, Interim-Chair

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission worked with legislators and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) to successfully advocate for passage of the Illinois FIRST Job Opportunities Initiative. This legislation requires contractors awarded large contracts to provide job opportunity information to applicants at the work site and to IDES for posting at job centers. It also requires contractors to supply information on employment of women and minorities to the state.
- ✓ The Commission collaborated with the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB), and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to identify and increase construction job opportunities for women and to identify potential construction sites for carrying out model female hiring initiatives.
- ✓ Commission members collaborated with IDES to identify mechanisms for providing Illinois residents with career information about state-funded construction jobs.
- ✓ The Commission collaborated with IDOT and CDB to identify approaches to analyze current female and minority employment by construction contractors on state projects. The working group collected contractor manpower utilization data in various regions throughout the state.
- ✓ The Commission researched women's access to employment on Illinois FIRST by tracking progress of women applying at various work sites. Commission members developed an outreach plan to utilize data to promote innovative approaches for effective monitoring and improved female and minority hiring on Illinois FIRST construction sites.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to develop strategies to provide women access to high-wage jobs created by Illinois FIRST and monitor women's participation in Illinois FIRST contracts. Find means to allow all residents of Illinois to have access to information about the Illinois FIRST jobs.
- Ensure female and minority hiring and retention on state-funded construction jobs through: contractor accountability for hiring practices; favorable work environments for women and minorities; and effective monitoring and compliance methods.
- Work with state agencies, contractors, labor unions, training institutions, and community organizations to implement recommended workforce utilization and project goals for women and minority workers.

It takes women until April to make what men made in the preceding year.  
We need to work together to make New Year's Eve *Pay Equity Day*.

—Chair Judith A. Gold

# balancing work and family

**Co-Chairs:** Commissioner Mary Cameron Frey and Commissioner Judy McCaskey

## 2000 Accomplishments

- ✓ The Commission held a “business-to-business” mentoring conference with the Women’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor to raise awareness of family-friendly business policies. Recommendations included forming an outreach plan to directly share information among businesses.
- ✓ The Commission established and awarded the first annual Governor’s Family Investment Awards, which honored nine Illinois companies for their family-friendly efforts. The goal of the award is to motivate businesses to implement family-friendly practices or to expand existing programs.
- ✓ In response to the Commission’s recommendations, the Department of Human Services (DHS) in 1999 increased rates of pay to child care centers and licensed homes by an annual rate of nearly \$40 million, allowing many providers to increase staff salaries. The Department also implemented programs to provide child care subsidies to eligible low-income families and devoted more resources to rural areas to increase access to child care across the state.
- ✓ The Commission made quality child care a priority and supported legislation to create the “Great START” program. The goal of the program, which is run by DHS, is to decrease child care staff turnover and increase the educational level of child care providers.
- ✓ The Commission organized and co-hosted a dialogue with the Department on Aging on “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.” The forum covered issues including legal custody, access to health care and necessary legislative and regulatory change. The Commission and the Department on Aging also co-sponsored a dialogue on “Caregivers” to develop proposals to remove barriers and provide assistance to caregivers through changes in state law, business work rules and other circumstances.

## 2001 Priorities

- Continue to promote higher wages for child care and elder care workers and explore strategies to accomplish those goals.
- Support improved access to child care facilities, particularly in rural areas.
- Continue to support the improvement of conditions in child care facilities through upgrades of sites and higher wages for workers.
- Collaborate with the Governor’s office to support maximum funding of Title XX, an annual appropriation which funds human services programs in virtually every legislative district.
- Encourage the business community to take a larger role in providing child and elder care, and in disseminating information about existing opportunities.
- Expand the Governor’s Family Investment Awards program throughout the Commission.

**Our goal is to find and implement ways to help women overcome the multi-faceted obligations they meet in their busy lives.**

**—Commissioner Judy McCaskey**

The Commission consists of 25 bipartisan Commissioners, appointed by the Governor, who have expertise in a broad range of subjects including law, social welfare, education, business, health, community service, government and child and family issues.

## Honorary Chair

### **Lieutenant Governor Corinne Wood**

Office of the Lieutenant Governor  
State of Illinois

## Chair

### **Judith A. Gold**

Director of Policy  
Office of the Mayor  
City of Chicago

## Commissioners

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Co-Chairman  
Operation PUSH

### **John H. Bryan**

Chairman  
Sara Lee Corporation

### **Norman Bobins**

President & CEO  
LaSalle National Bank

### **Marylou D. Crane**

Executive Director  
Lincoln Excellence in Public Service Series

### **Mary Cameron Frey**

Columnist  
Chicago Sun-Times

### **Cary Groth**

Director of Athletics  
Northern Illinois University

### **Kaethe Morris Hoffer**

Manager of Federal Affairs  
Chicago AIDS Foundation

### **Anne Ladky**

Executive Director  
Women Employed

### **Judy McCaskey**

Elementary School Teacher  
C.C.S.D. #15-Palatine

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Director  
Chicago Department of Public Health  
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Assistant Vice President, State Legislative Affairs  
Illinois State Medical Society

### **Audrey Rone-Peebles**

Chief Executive Officer (retired)  
YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago

### **Margarita Perez**

President and Chief Investment Officer  
Fortaleza Asset Management, Inc.

### **Miriam “Mim” Pride**

President  
Blackburn College

### **Hedy M. Ratner**

Co-President  
Women's Business Development Center

### **Kathleen Rothschild**

Public Affairs Consultant  
Kathleen Rothschild Public Affairs Consulting

### **Gerri Scott**

Deputy Executive Director: Strategic Services  
PACE

### **Barbara Shaw**

Director  
Illinois Violence Prevention Authority

### **Lauren Sugerman**

President  
Chicago Women in Trades

### **Jayne Carr Thompson**

Managing Principal-Chicago  
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### **Christina Pedersen Taylor**

### **Joyce Watson**

President  
Illinois Agricultural Leadership  
Foundation

### **Cynthia R. Williams**

Executive Director  
Austin Peoples Action Center

### **Julia Zhu**

Associate Vice-President  
Citibank, F.S.B.

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Office of the Governor  
Director of Policy Development

### **Dr. Hazel Loucks**

Office of the Governor  
Deputy Governor

## Executive Director

### **Ellen Solomon**

*Special Assistant to  
the Executive Director*  
Erika Goodman

*Assistant to the Executive Director*  
Rebecca Fyffe

Office of the Governor  
James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph St.  
Suite 16-100  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
(312) 814-5743  
(312) 814-3823 fax  
[www.state.il.us/commission/women](http://www.state.il.us/commission/women)



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